DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 254 815 CG 018 102

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TITLE Jobs. How Do I Get There...from Here? A Worker's Guide to Finding Employment.
PUB DATE Apr 85
NOTE 75p.; Presented at the Annual Convention of the American Association for Counseling and Development (Houston, TX, March 18-21, 1984).
AVAILABLE FROM Life Working Associates, 5078 Crystal Lake Road, Rhinelander, WI 54501.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Career Choice; Career Exploration; *Employment Interviews; *Job Application: *Job Search Methods; *Resumes (Personal)

ABSTRACT

This guide on job-seeking skills is designed for independent use. Part 1 reviews the basic factors involved in making a career decision. Part 2 describes the purpose of the resume and provides step-by-step instruction for writing a resume and cover letter. Examples of different styles of resumes and cover letters are included. Part 3 discusses job search strategies, and suggests job search criteria. Part 4 describes different types of employment interviews, and provides a summary of tips for effective interviewing and questions commonly asked by employment interviewers. Information about equal employment opportunities, a list of commonly used work skills, and a reference list are appended. (LLL)

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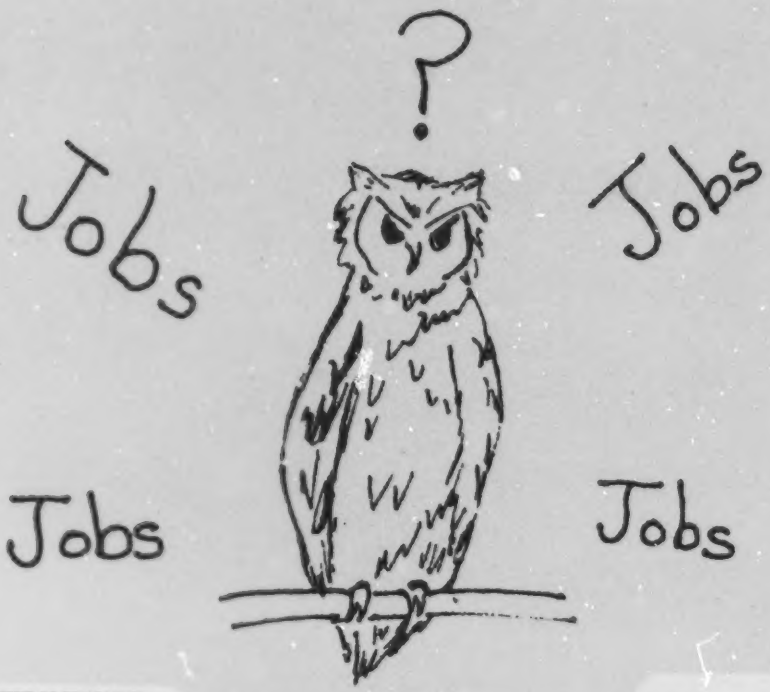

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HOW DO I GET THERE...

...FROM HERE?

A WORKER'S GUIDE TO FINDING EMPLOYMENT

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Charles A. Harkness

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

by

Charles A. Harkness, Ed.D.

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FOREWORD

or

What This Book Can Do For You

The advertisement in the Help Wanted section of a metropolitan newspaper sought a part-time custodial helper—someone who had experience with industrial scrubbers. It read like most such ads, until it got to the last sentence, which read, "Send resume and references to Box _____, c/o _____." A blind ad for a part-time custodial helper! During the summer of 1982, other, similar newspapers have carried similar ads for carpenters, bartenders, retail sales clerks....

This is not a Summer of '82 phenomenon, a time of the highest unemployment since 1940. No, this condition is projected to last throughout the 1980s, with more people seeking jobs than there are jobs available. Blind ads will continue to be common for blue collar and pink collar workers; jobs will be difficult to find, and workers will be forced to adopt the same job-hunting/job-changing techniques that have been used by white collar workers for many years.

Traditionally, writing an employment letter and a resume have been step one in the job hunt. There are even books available titled, RESUMES THAT GET JOBS.

Somehow, those pieces of paper (hammered out on a Sunday afternoon in response to an ad in the Sunday morning paper) were to perform all sorts of magic for us...create an employer's interest, detail our accomplishments, give promise of future achievements, get us a good salary.

Resumes are no longer the first step in the job search. Preparing a resume and a letter accompanying it come only after you have devoted a lot of time to self-searching. Before you begin to write a resume, you must have decided just what it is you want from the rest of your life.

And if you don't take the time (and extend the effort) to decide what it is you want from the rest of your life? You just might find yourself as one of those people whom Henry David Thoreau described when he said, "The mass of men live out their lives in quiet desperation."

In the event that you've not made a firm decision about what to do with the rest of your life (or at least the next several years), the first few pages of this book—PART I—are devoted to a review of the basic factors which are involved in making a career decision. Hopefully, even as sketchy as the information is, you will be able to draw the pieces all together.

And once you have, then turn to PART II and begin working on your resume, for every resume for every kind of job is probably going to be different from every other resume. Once that resume (and the letter which usually accompanies it) is written, what do you do with it? What is the most effective way of utilizing not only what you have learned as you prepared your resume, but of using the resume itself?

PART III of this book is devoted to Job Search Strategy, and the key word is STRATEGY. It is possible to conduct a job search by going off in all directions at once. People do find jobs that way. It may not be the best job, but it's a job; there is a paycheck at the end of the week.

The word, strategy, is used on purpose. In today's (and tomorrow's) job market you must be aggressive; you must prepare a campaign which will lead you to a logical end—the job you want as a step in the career you want. And once the strategy is developed, and put into effect, there finally comes the day when someone says, "I want to talk to you...."

And at last we have come to PART IV, the Employment Interview. This is the pay-off! Almost no one gets a job without an interview.

The job interview is a conversation with a purpose. Your purpose is to sell yourself; the employer's purpose is to determine whether or not to "buy" you. Just what is it that you have to sell? And can you make the sale?

Now...

Read on...and Good Luck!

INTRODUCTION

William Faulkner said it: "Man doesn't eat for eight hours a day, and he can't make love for eight hours a day...the only thing man does for eight hours a day besides sleep is to work. No wonder man is so miserable."

Studs Terkel, author of the book, WORKING, countered Faulkner with, "I've never had a job I didn't like."

A few facts:

--Most people work 40 hours a week. Most people get two weeks of vacation per year. That means in your first year on a job you will work 2,000 hours...or 10,000 hours in five years...or 80,000 hours in the 40 years of the average work life.

--Today, one-half of the people in the labor market are women. They will work, on the average, 33 years outside the home.

--Only about 20 percent—one-fifth—of the jobs in the United States require a college degree.

--In the course of your work life, you will make—on the average—five radical changes of jobs. Some of these changes will be promotions...some will be changes of employers...

...And some will be because you just think you can't stand another day on the kind of work you are doing and you are determined to make a change, even if that change may require that you take some time off and seek more training.

And all of that means you are going to need a resume...and a job search strategy...and information on interviewing techniques and how to sell yourself....

Read on.

PART I—WHAT WILL I DO FOR A LIVING?

Getting a job can be a very uncomplicated task. It can be as simple as walking door-to-door and saying, "Hi, do you have any jobs?" Eventually—if you knock on enough doors—someone is going to give you a job.

But is it the right job? Is it the job on which you can start building a career? Is this really something that you want to do?

Or is it just a job that provides a paycheck at the end of the week and that you have to force yourself to go to each morning? If it is to be the former—building a career—you must start by sorting out your values.

What are the important things (events, people) in your life? Are you most concerned about:

Where you live	Your work environment
Leisure time activities	Quality of schools
Size of the paycheck	Closeness of your family

If one of your very important values happens to be, for instance, the chance to get out on cross-country skis every day during the winter, you have just excluded about two-thirds of the United States.... Or maybe you place great value on being able to be home every night, which means that you are not going to look for a job requiring a lot of long-distance travel.... We all make decisions about our values, often without even stopping to think very clearly what we are concerned about most.

Now that you have a picture of your values...what of your skills? What is it that you can do because you have done it? Possibly you take great pride in the quality of your vegetable and flower garden. Can these skills be put to work in a greenhouse or a

nursery? What additional skills do you need to gain before you can manage a greenhouse or own a nursery? Sorting out your skills, finding the ones you like to use, can take a lot of time...And it can also pay off handsomely! A list of most-used skills is included in Appendix B.

Along with your skills, you must consider your abilities. Possibly you like working with small tools and your hands; are you big enough and strong enough to work on Diesel truck engines? If not, maybe you should think about using your skill with handtools with small engines—lawn-mowers, garden tractors, snowblowers, chain saws....

What are your interests? How do your interests "fit" those of people who are working in different occupations? Mostly, comparing your interests with those of people in different kinds of work is something which must be done by testing. Unless you have a clear picture of your likes and your dislikes and how they match up with people who are working in different occupations, you should talk with a counselor about this area.

Still a fifth point which needs to be considered in making a career decision is your personality. There seem to be some people who are "...just born to be a salesperson." There are other people who are not comfortable trying to sell something to somebody. These may be people who work better by themselves, or work with things instead of with words....

And lastly (and always present), what is the labor market? What is the labor market both now and in the future? Is there going to be a need for your chosen occupation...or will your choice of career join that of the buggy whip maker? And what about your

particular portion of the labor market? Even though the occupation is in demand, is it in demand either where you live or where it is you want to live?

Trying to be a surfing instructor in Chicago is not a good way to make a living.

And now, based upon the best available evidence, you have made a choice of a career; and you have acquired all of the necessary skills; so...

PART II: LET'S WRITE A RESUME

Ré-su-mé. It is NOT pronounced rē-zoo-mē. It is NOT pronounced rē-zoom. It is pronounced rey-szhoo-mey. The word is French and means compilation. In the United States labor market it means to summarize...your life.

What is a resume? What can a resume do for you? What do you want a resume to do for you?

A resume is your advertisement.

A resume shows your accomplishments... competencies...skills.

A resume tells an employer what you want to do--your objectives.

A resume tells something about you as a person.

A resume is an accurate resource for a prospective employer.

A RESUME IS YOUR ADVERTISEMENT

It doesn't matter what the business is, or what the product is, it sells best if it is advertised.

You are ready to enter the labor market. You know what it is you want to do. Unless you advertise, however, no one else will ever know.

And so...

You tell your friends about it...

You talk with your barber or hairdresser...

You talk to your minister...

Your banker...

A bartender...

The clerk at the post office....

But you haven't reached very many people. So you arrange with a friend who is a pilot to fly over your city and sky-write...

JERRY SEEKS JOB.

What kind of job? Where? Who is Jerry? How do I get in touch with him? And besides that, in just about ten minutes the wind has blown the message away; and the whole time the message was in the sky, the person who could have hired you was talking on the telephone and didn't see the message....

You have seen the sections of classified ads in the newspapers headed, HELP WANTED. (More about them later.) There is another section, which comes just before the Help Wanted classification; its heading is:

SITUATIONS WANTED

Under this heading of Situations Wanted might be an ad which will read:

> Ambitious young man, degree in accounting,
> seeks employment with forward looking firm.
> Tel: 689-4531.

Generally, these advertisements produce no responses. The exception is when someone offers a service such as:

> CHILD CARE, Monday to Friday, your home or mine.
> Tel: 689-1234.

or

> LICENSED PLUMBER reasonable rates. Call day
> or night. Tel: 689-4321.

And so...

Probably your best form of advertising is your resume. You need to adopt all of the principles of advertising as you prepare your resume...

Keep it short...

Keep it neat...

Keep it clean...

Use the best available method of

reproduction....

And above all...

TELL YOUR STORY!

THE PARTS OF A RESUME

Most resumes are in six sections...

PERSONAL INFORMATION

JOB OBJECTIVE

EDUCATION

WORK EXPERIENCE

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

REFERENCES

Most resumes have six sections, but your resume doesn't have to have all six. Remember, it is your advertisement; and it is up to you to advertise yourself in the best possible way. You might want to leave out one or more of the six sections. Most commonly, the one which is left out is JOB OBJECTIVE.

The one, on the other hand, which is never left out is:

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Without any personal information, who will know (besides you, that is) whose resume is being reviewed? Typically, also, the personal information portion of the resume is at the beginning. It contains:

Name Address

Telephone Number

Traditionally, the personal information portion of the resume also contained such information as:

Date of Birth Marital Status

Number of Dependents Health Status

Religion.

This is no longer the case. Putting such information in the resume only gives the prospective employer information which is not needed

and which may work against you. If you give your birth date, for example, you give the employer a chance to decide that you are either too old or too young and never invite you for an interview. (Later on, you will learn that an employer really can't ask you a lot of personal information until you have been hired--so why give it?)

There can be some exceptions. For example, if you are single, and you know that a particular job requires a lot of travel and days and days away from home at a time.... In this case, it just might work to your advantage to indicate in your resume that you are single and that you enjoy travel.

Except for isolated cases though, the less personal information you give the prospective employer...The Better the Chance for You.

JOB OBJECTIVE

Typically, the job objective is the second portion of the resume. Once you have introduced yourself, you need to tell the employer what it is you want to do.

BE SPECIFIC!

Your job objective is a short statement--25 words or less. It tells specifically what it is you want to do...

JOB OBJECTIVE: A position in outside sales for a consumer products firm...

A position as a computer programmer with a technically based production company...

An entry-level position as a legal typist with the opportunity to advance to legal secretary...

A position as a retail sales clerk with an opportunity to advance into a management training program...

Job Objective (Continued)

A position as a finish carpenter with a residential construction firm...

Your job objective does NOT read..

JOB OBJECTIVE: A challenging position in a forward-looking industry with chance for advancement to top management...

An entry-level position in sales, production management, or personnel...

Of these last two job objective statements, the first one does not tell the prospective employer anything; the second tells the employer only that you don't know what it is you want to do. If you know that you can work effectively in any of the three areas, then prepare three resumes.

Assuming that you have made a decision as to just what it is you would like to do for a living...What is your job objective?

JOB OBJECTIVE: _____

_____

_____

NOW COMES THE HARD PART

You have either made a precise statement of your job objective... or you have decided to leave that part out of your resume. But how are you going to arrange the remainder...education...experience... personal experiences...and what are you going to say?

Are you just completing school, whether high school, community college, technical institute, or college? If so, probably your next major heading is:

EDUCATION

List your last education first (the place where you received your most recent diploma or certificate).

Don't list more than two schools for any one diploma or certificate (your resume begins to be cluttered).

If you have a college degree, don't list your high school.

Don't list elementary or junior high--even if you never went beyond junior high or dropped out in high school. In this event, you don't need an education entry at all; you want to sell something other than your education to a prospective employer.

MY EDUCATION RECORD

College Attended_____

Dates of Attendance_____Major_____

Degree_____College Location_____

High School Attended_____

Dates of Attendance_____Diploma_____

High School Location_____

Maybe you dropped out of high school and later took the General Education Development Equivalency exams. Some high schools will give you a diploma, just as though you actually graduated. Most, however, will not. Your education entry might read:

EDUCATION: Equivalent to High School Graduation

You don't have to say anything more...No apologies...No explanations...just a simple statement of fact.

If you have been out of school for any period of time, your education, whether high school or college, is not going to be the most important thing you have to sell. Throughout the 1980s, the U.S.

labor market is going to be highly competitive, and you are going to have to have something to sell besides your education. Your education is not going to be your third heading on the resume; instead, the third heading is going to be one labeled:

EXPERIENCE.

And this is your chance to be really creative. It also is certainly the most difficult portion of the resume to write. Out of your past experience...

What work is relevant to the type of position being sought?

What work is important?

How far back?

What about volunteer experience?

The place to start is by listing EVERY job you have ever held. (Yes, even back to when you threw newspapers in the seventh grade.) Don't forget your various volunteer experiences--scout leader... campfire leader...church work...civic club work...high school and college club or social organization work....

Now, on as many sheets of paper as the task might require, prepare a brief write-up on each of those jobs. It might look like this:

JOB TITLE_____ DATES_____

EMPLOYER OR ORGANIZATION_____

WHAT I DID (Just enough words so that your memory is well "jogged".)_____

_____

Once the writing is done, cut the pages of paper into strips, with a separate job and its write-up on each strip. Step two is to

"cluster" all these jobs. Which ones were primarily sales oriented? ...production oriented?...people jobs?...technical skill jobs?... service jobs?.... (If you flipped hamburgers in a fast food operation--that's production. If you sold hamburgers in the same place--that's sales. And in both cases they might be considered service jobs.)

Stop at this point and review your job objective. Are you, for instance, looking for a position in sales? You want to concentrate on the cluster of jobs that involved sales. Perhaps one of the jobs in the sales cluster has a "What I did" statement which reads, "Sold magazines". These two words need to be expanded into what the job was really all about...nothing long--maybe 50 words maximum...just put down the facts.

JOB TITLE Magazine sales person DATES Summer 1978

EMPLOYER Western Sales, Inc.; Denver, CO

WHAT I DID Sold magazines, from an established list, door-to-door in a set territory. Described magazines available, gave price comparisons, collected one-half of subscription cost, filled out order forms.

Do this for every one of the jobs in the cluster.

IT'S DECISION TIME AGAIN...

At this point (you've identified clusters of types of jobs) you can go either of two directions. One direction is:

THE TRADITIONAL OR CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME.

Look in any resume guide book written before 1970 (and a lot of resume books written since then), and the only type of resume model you will find is one that is chronological. That is:

Each job is written up separately--a statement of the duties performed on the job--and jobs are listed on the resume in reverse order, that is, the last position is the first one given.

Your experience section of your resume will look like...

1979-1981 Bartender, Wild Horse Bar; Hopscotch, WI

Tended bar five days a week from 4:00 p.m. to closing. Mixed drinks of all types, collected cash from customers and rang up sales and made change. Restocked the bar as necessary. Washed glasses. Listened to customers.

1978-1979 Sweeper, ABC Industries; Juneau, IL

Worked day shift in a plant sweeping up metal shavings and keeping the floor clean of debris.

And it didn't matter if you were a bartender, or a production worker, or an accountant, or a secretary, or a company vice-president...

ALL RESUMES LOOKED THE SAME.

But about 1970, resumes began to change. There were several reasons for the change...

--There really weren't as many jobs as there were people looking for jobs.

--People who wanted jobs had to be aggressive and imaginative in order to be employed.

--And lots of people who were bartenders, and production workers, and accountants, and secretaries, and company vice-presidents decided they wanted to be something else....

THE SKILLS, OR FUNCTIONAL, RESUME CAME INTO BEING

The chronological resume is still good, and it is still used. If you still want to be a bartender, but you are tired of the Wild

Horse Bar...you'd like to move to some place like the Tame Horse Supper Club where all you had to do was take care of the dinner trade and most of the orders came from the waitresses and waiters--you would use a chronological resume.

The same thing is true if you want to continue as a production worker...or accountant...or secretary...or vice-president....

If you want to work in a government position, you will probably need to use a chronological resume.

Most social service positions will require a chronological resume. The same thing is true of most positions in educational institutions.

But if you have been a bartender only while you were preparing for another vocation, or you think you would like a sales position because it probably pays more than tending bar and besides you don't have to be concerned about late night hours...

THEN YOU NEED A SKILLS RESUME.

Let's go back and look at those two job write-ups on page 14. Identify the skills in the jobs. They are:

Talked to customers	Listened to customers
Sold merchandise	Collected cash
Made change	Took inventory
Restocked from warehouse	
Memorized merchandise	Manipulated equipment
Reliable on the job	Safety conscious

(Maybe you are having difficulty figuring out where some of these skills came from. If you listened to customers, you had to talk with them also. You would not have lasted as a bartender for two years if you had not memorized the principal drinks and the location

of the bar stock. You had to take inventory in order to reconcile your cash take each night at closing. You manipulated the bar equipment and the sweeping broom and trash bag. Certainly you had to be safety conscious on both jobs.)

Now, let's turn these skills into a different kind of entry for the EXPERIENCE block on your resume...

JOB OBJECTIVE: A position in outside sales for a consumer products firm.

RELATED SKILLS:

SALESMANSHIP: Have an established record of persuading customers to purchase additional merchandise, as well as talking selected customers into not taking more. Sales records indicate a 75% increase in business in a two-year period.

CASH AND INVENTORY CONTROL: Sales of small item, cash-only merchandise ranged from 50 to 500 items per day. Daily cash and inventory reconciliation were never more than one percent out of balance.

LISTENING: It is as important for an effective sales person to know when to listen to the customer as it is to know when to talk and be persuasive. My sales record indicates that I am an effective listener.

....

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:

1979-1981 Wild Horse Bar; Hopscotch, WI
1978-1979 ABC Industries; Juneau, IL

And not once, in this resume, did you acknowledge directly that you were either a bartender or a sweeper. Almost certainly the individual reading your resume (the prospective employer) is going to guess...but before the reader reaches the EMPLOYMENT HISTORY portion of your resume, a positive impression of your sales ability is being formed. Any negative connotations to being a bartender are going to be much less than if the first word read is BARTENDER....

You are going to be able to make the transition from tending bar to sales.

Now it is time to list your skills. Complete this sentence:

My most used and liked skills (whether learned on the job, in volunteer work, or in hobbies) are:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Now write a 50-word statement on each of these skills, telling how competent you are with each of them. Don't be shy about what you put down; at this point, at least, no one is going to be reading what you write except you. Tell yourself just how good you think you are with each skill area.

SKILL:_____ _____

_____

_____

_____

SKILL:_____ _____

_____

_____

_____

SKILL:_____ _____

_____

_____

_____

SKILL:_____ _____

_____

_____

_____

Or you might wish to combine both the chronological and the functional resumes. You are tired of being a bartender in a place that serves only drinks. You want to make the step up to the restaurant or supper club--you like the idea of preparing drinks primarily for dinners and people who might be there for an evening of entertainment. Your resume might look like:

JOB OBJECTIVE: A position as a bartender in an establishment serving meals as well as drinks.

RELATED SKILLS: In the course of my work history, I have developed skills needed by a person who must operate from memory in preparing drinks, yet who must keep accurate records to control both cash and inventory. I am able to listen carefully, regardless of surroundings, to work rapidly and yet remain constantly safety-conscious in my surroundings.

EXPERIENCE:

1979-1981 Bartender, Wild Horse Bar; Hopscotch, WI

Tended bar five days a week...

Thus far in our work on a resume, we have dealt with what you are--your education...work experience...job objective....

But WHAT you are is only a part of you, and only a part of the person seeking employment. That prospective employer is also interested in WHO you are, and an exploration of who you are leads us to the last part of your resume, the part about:

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

The personal experience portion of your resume is also difficult to write; you might even consider leaving it out. Employment experts disagree on its importance. Some say to leave it out; your personal background is not relevant to the job hunt. Others say to by all means include personal information (experience); it is the portion of your resume which makes you a real person.

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There is little question that personal experience is not as important as work experience--unless you have little or no work experience. However, if I (prospective employer) am going to hire you, I probably want to know something more about you than your skills, your knowledge, your abilities. If I hire you, I am going to have to live with you eight hours a day, five days a week. WHO is this person who wants to operate my cash register...greet my customers... gather data for the reports which I write...is under my supervision on the production line...serve as my secretary...?

If you give personal information in your resume, you run the risk of being rejected because of it. On the other hand, if you don't give personal information--you run the risk of spending effort and time in an employment interview only to be rejected because of personal experience information which comes out then. The decision is yours....

What goes into this personal experience block?

Hobbies...activities...organizations (other than professional organizations)...in short, the things you do during times when you are not at work. Maybe these are the things you and your supervisor are going to talk about during breaks in your work...or over lunch...or as you go home after work with one of your associates.

You don't, however, just list hobbies or activities. Describe your level of competence...

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES: Am an accomplished cross-country skier, having won three of the last seven races entered. Enjoy back-packing and primitive camping. Try to spend time each day reading science fiction, and devote each Saturday morning during the winter to working with teenagers at the neighborhood youth center.

NOT

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES: Cross-country skiing, camping, reading science fiction, youth work.

This second entry not only does not tell anything about your competence as a cross-country skier, it does not tell whether you enjoy wilderness camping or drive your 30-foot motor home to the nearest park with sanitary hook-ups....

There is still one more portion of your resume...

REFERENCES.

Do not list your references on your resume; they only take up space which can be better utilized in describing both what and who you are. Your entry for references will be the shortest of all...

REFERENCES: Available upon request.

Occasionally, employers will ask that references be submitted along with your resume. Have a separate sheet available containing names of references (both business and personal) so that you can enclose it when necessary. You will find other uses for it, too. Inevitably, application blanks will ask for references. If you have this list with you, you will have no difficulty coming up with names, addresses, telephone numbers as they are needed.

WHO ARE YOUR REFERENCES?

Almost all application blanks ask for three to five references, "Not relatives or former employers." Who do you use?

--People WITH whom you have worked (that's different than FOR whom you have worked).

--A former teacher with whom you had a good relationship (and who remembers you).

--Your minister.

--Your banker.

--Your next door neighbor.

Always talk with an individual whom you might use as a reference. Make sure they are willing to provide you with a reference, and that their comments will make positive statements about you.

And now, it is time for:

RULES...RULES...AND MORE RULES...

Your resume is complete. You have it in draft form and you are satisfied with the draft...

--Be sure it does not run more than two pages, and try to keep it down to one page.

--Have it typed on a good electric typewriter using a carbon-tape ribbon.

--Have it reproduced by a photo offset process. Don't use mimeograph if you can possibly avoid it. NEVER use a spirit duplicator. In an emergency, some of the instant photo, or heat transfer, processes can produce good copy.

--Use a good quality paper. A 20% rag content bond is the best (and most expensive). Use white or a light buff-colored paper. Unless you are an artist, don't use any "arty" or bright-colored paper.

YOU MAY HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME FINDING EMPLOYMENT...

...BECAUSE of some special and unusual circumstances.

These special and unusual circumstances may involve long periods of unemployment as a result of:

--Being laid off as a result of an industrial accident which disabled you.

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--A disabling automobile or home accident which left you unable to work.

--Being confined to a correctional institution.

--Being admitted to a mental health facility.

And now you are fully rehabilitated. You know what your work limitations are; you know what it is you can and can't do--whether your layoff was the result of injury, accident, or confinement. But how do you convince an employer?

Your layoff might have been such that you never really have to tell anyone. Possibly your accident occurred in January and by August you are ready to return to work. Your resume might look like this:

1975-1982 (Name of employer)

1973-1975 (Name of employer)

Or possibly during this period, you already had (or developed) a skill so that you could be at least partially self-employed. State so, on your resume and your application blank. On the other hand, if you were not able to generate any kind of significant income, don't try to hide behind the "Self-Employed" approach. When you are asked for individual job references and you are not able to give any....

This whole area, however, may not be so easy to handle. Perhaps you were fired for cause from your last job...

--Perhaps you have been confined to a correctional institution for several years.

--Maybe you have a disabling injury suit pending against your former employer....

For any number of reasons, you may not be able to (or may not wish to) cover your extended period away from the active labor market. You do still have some choices.

One choice is to prepare a so-called chronological resume...but not put any dates on it. Of course, this approach can immediately raise the suspicions of a potential employer in terms of, "I wonder why there are no dates? Is this an older person? Is the individual trying to hide something?" End of consideration of your application for the job.

A totally skills approach is another way of avoiding the problem. In such a resume there is no mention of the employers or of dates... and the employer reaction is quite likely to be the same as with the individual who prepared a chronological resume.

Or just maybe the best way to handle the situation is not to try to hide. One does not have to be painfully honest; your resume does not have to say

1979- Confined to State Correctional Institution
1982

It would be far, far better for your resume to say nothing. There is a time gap; you are "up front" about it; and you do your best in the rest of your contact--both in person and by mail--to see to it that the potential employer has the best possible impression of you.

And now, for the most important rule of all...

WRITE A GOOD LETTER TO ACCOMPANY YOUR RESUME!

Let's suppose you are answering an advertisement in the newspaper. Probably somewhere between 25 and 200 other people are responding to the same ad. You have got to make YOUR advertisement--your resume--stand out! The letter you write is probably the best way to do it.

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Typically, the person who does the first screening of the resumes will devote between thirty seconds and three minutes to each one. The more resumes there are to read, the shorter the time spent on each; so....

Your letter is the first piece of paper the reader sees. Write it so that the reader wants to turn the page and read more! Bring yourself to life!

Let's say you are a bartender and you want to move up to a better bar than the one you are in now. You see an ad in the HELP WANTED section of the paper...

> BARTENDER wanted to work from 4 to 11 in restaurant and bar specializing in dinner trade. Mix drinks, stock bar, maintain inventory. Send resume and references to Box 16, DAILY NEWS.

What will your letter say? You know there are a lot of unemployed bartenders in the area; you know there are probably others besides yourself who would like to make a move. You know that this restaurant, whichever one it is, is probably going to attract 50 to 100 resumes. You want yours to wind up at or near the top...you want to at least be invited to interview!

Before you start writing that letter, pause a minute and ask yourself...

...Just what is it that restaurant managers who hire bartenders look for? (You already have a resume made up with a job objective of tending bar in a restaurant.) And you come up with thoughts such as:

Reliability	Speed
Honesty	Customer Rapport
Records Keeping	Appearance

and some others.... But you think a letter can be written which, together with your resume, will give a good picture of you.

Write a letter which enlarges upon your resume. Do not try to summarize the resume; you want the manager to read it; why give the person a chance to skip right over it? When you are done, you have a letter which reads...

Your address
City, State, ZIP
Today's Date

Paste a copy
of the ad here.
(You don't have a
name or address.)

Good morning! Your advertisement in the Help Wanted section of the DAILY NEWS for (date) asks for resumes from experienced bartenders. My resume is enclosed, together with a list of references.

I think there are some points about being a bartender which need to be stressed, however. A dinner customer who must wait for more than five minutes for a pre-dinner drink is likely to become a dissatisfied customer, no matter the quality of the meal. In the statewide bartender's competition in 1981 I placed second (out of 25 finalists) in speed in mixing six commonly called drinks and first in mixing six unusual and seldom-called drinks. In short, I have a good memory, can manipulate equipment rapidly, and am a fast reader!

A second point of pride with me is that I do not show favoritism among waiters or waitresses who might be placing an order with me; my service is not only fast; it is also strictly first-come-first-served. I am clean, my appearance is good, and I neither smoke nor drink.

An interview can be arranged at your convenience, although I would prefer interviewing in the morning.

Sincerely yours,

Your name, typed

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Now, let's analyze the letter. Why is it written in this manner?

--You have no information for an inside address; use a copy of the ad, especially if it is short.

--There is no salutation--because there is no one you can identify. "Dear Sir" could well be offensive if the manager is a woman. "Dear Sir or Madame" is awkward; "Dear Box 16" sounds sort of weird...

--...and so "Good Morning" was substituted. That has a nice, warm ring to it! Besides, restaurant managers (managers of any kind) get busier as the day goes along; the mail is probably opened first thing...

--You added the term, experienced. The original advertisement did not call for an experienced bartender. Develop an illusion! (That's what advertising is all about!)

--In paragraphs two and three you discussed favorable points about yourself which are not in the resume. It shows that you analyzed the job, the setting, and how you can fit into the picture.

--The last paragraph...it would be better if you could call the manager to arrange an appointment time, but since you don't have a telephone number....

AND NOW, SOME MORE RULES...

--The only firm rule in resume writing is that it contains your name, address, and telephone number.

--The best resume for you is the one which you prepare yourself and with which you feel most comfortable.

--Be sure all words are spelled correctly (get a dictionary if in doubt!); be sure punctuation is accurate.

--The ideal resume is the resume which is used only once...a different resume should be prepared for each application or inquiry. If you are working hard at finding employment, this is going to be a difficult task; but as you develop your resume...your letter...do your best to have an image of the business firm or agency which will receive it.

The next several pages are devoted to samples of resumes. Look them over; choose the style you think is best for you and best for the type of job you are after...or maybe adapt from two or more of the resumes...or maybe create your own format in your own style.

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A RESUME WHICH MIGHT BE USED BY A STUDENT
SEEKING SUMMER EMPLOYMENT

NAME
ADDRESS
TELEPHONE

JOB OBJECTIVE: A summer position in direct sales.

EDUCATION:
1979-1980 — Wherever College, City, State
Working toward an Associate of Arts Degree, planning to transfer to a four-year college.

EXPERIENCE:

1978-Present — Assistant Scoutmaster, Troop 585

Work with boys aged 11 to 16, helping them with projects, maintaining discipline on campouts, relieving scoutmaster as needed.

1977-1979 — Burger King

Inside sales for a fast food vendor. Responsible for own cash box, reconciling sales with receipts at end of shift. In two years never had an error greater than one percent.

Summer 1979 — Southwestern Company, Nashville, TN

After a two week training period, assigned a territory as a part of a team and sold children's book door-to-door. Wrote up orders, collected deposits and final sales, kept all expense records. Grossed $9,500, and after meeting all expenses, including personal living costs, netted $1,100 for nine weeks of work.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE: Am an accomplished cross-country skier and a member of my college debate team.

REFERENCES: Available upon request.

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A HOMEMAKER SEEKING A FIRST-EMPLOYMENT
EXPERIENCE MIGHT CONSIDER THIS RESUME

YOUR NAME
ADDRESS TELEPHONE:

(Leave out JOB OBJECTIVE. This is an instance where it could be introduced in the letter.)

SKILLS: MANAGEMENT--Have successfully presided over organizations with memberships as large as 350, coordinating all activities of the organization including budgeting, organizing, staffing of volunteers, and delegation of responsibilities.

PURCHASING--Operating within an after-tax budget of $15,000 per annum, provided for the complete living, social, and recreational needs of a living unit of five. Solely responsible for making purchasing decisions on items costing less than $250.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT--Primary responsibility for oversight of education, training, and development of three children, two of whom are now earning 75% of their college expenses. Also involved in ancillary training and development of others in Cub Scout and Girl Scout activities.

EQUIPMENT USAGE--Am skilled with a variety of small tools, including the ability to perform minor engine tune-ups. Can effectively operate most pieces of office and household equipment.

EDUCATION: High School Graduate, 1963
Commercial and College Prep concentration.

PERSONAL
EXPERIENCE: Enjoy watching basketball in the winter and participating in water skiing in the summer. My quiet time is devoted to reading historical novels. I enjoy serious conversation.

REFERENCES: Available upon request.

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LOOKING FOR A NEW JOB?

NAME

ADDRESS TELEPHONE:

JOB OBJECTIVE: Position in real estate management and maintenance, preferably in a condominium or association setting.

SUMMARY OF SKILLS: For nearly 20 years I have sold residential real estate and managed residential rentals including rent collections, disbursements and performing or contracting maintenance both on an emergency basis and as a preventive measure.

EXPERIENCE:

1970-1982 New World Realty; Kansas City, MO
Manager
From an opening operation of self and one clerk, business has grown to 12 full-time agents with 5 clerks and an accountant handling $7 million in sales per year in addition to rental management of 100 pieces of residential property.

1968-Present Treasurer, Non-profit organization with annual budget of $50,000 and a 20-year-old physical plant with book value of $100,000.

1965-1972 Out-Of-This-World Realty; Kansas City, MO
Broker
Began working as an unlicensed agent managing residential properties which were rented in lieu of sale. Continued in rental management after obtaining license. Seven rental owners moved their accounts to New World Realty upon formation of that business.

EDUCATION: High School Graduate
Kansas City Public Schools

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE: Golf as necessary to maintain business contacts, with handicap of 10. Run five miles or more daily, except in inclement weather. Avid reader of science fiction.

REFERENCES: Available upon request.

THIS PERSON DECIDED TO USE A CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME IN SEEKING A POSITION IN AN OFFICE WORD PROCESSING UNIT

NAME
ADDRESS TELEPHONE:

JOB OBJECTIVE: Position as a Correspondence Specialist with a progressive word processing unit.

EDUCATION: Wherever Community College
AA in Secretarial Science, 1982

EMPLOYMENT & EXPERIENCE: Secretary, Allison Insurance

1979-1982 Began working as a clerk-typist, the junior person in a three-person office. For the first year, served as receptionist and did routine policy/forms typing. Promoted to office supervisor and personal secretary to the manager of the firm, responsible for a wide variety of clerical and secretarial tasks.

1977-1979 Waitress

Waited counter and tables in three different restaurants, each serving a more discriminating and demanding clientele than the previous.

1976-1977 Clerk-Typist

Worked as typist, file clerk, and receptionist relief in the general offices of a timber harvesting firm.

PERSONAL INTERESTS: Enjoy reading historical novels and listening to good music. Am an avid winter sports participant, having competed successfully in a number of local events.

REFERENCES: Available upon request.

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OR...THE SAME PERSON MIGHT HAVE DECIDED
TO USE A SKILLS RESUME

NAME
ADDRESS TELEPHONE:

JOB OBJECTIVE: Position as a Correspondence Specialist with a progressive word processing unit.

RELATED SKILLS: Equipment: A complete familiarity with the IBM Mag Card A and IBM Mag Card II. A working knowledge of the IBM OS/6.

Secretarial/Clerical: Four years of increasingly responsible clerical experience as well as personal secretary responsibilities in an insurance agency with sales of $15 million yearly.

Supervisory: Can effectively operate and supervise a small office as proved by reduction of clerical overtime without affecting production.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:

1979-1982 Secretary
Allison Insurance

1977-1979 Waitress

1976-1977 Clerk-Typist

EDUCATION: Wherever College
AA in Secretarial Science, 1982

PERSONAL INTEREST: Enjoy reading historical novels and listening to good music. Am an avid winter sports participant, having competed successfully in a number of local events.

REFERENCES: Available upon request.

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A SEMI-SKILLED LABORER MIGHT USE THIS RESUME

NAME
ADDRESS TELEPHONE:

JOB OBJECTIVE: Position in dairy farming, preferably in milking and working in milking parlor.

SUMMARY OF SKILLS: For nearly 25 years I have worked on dairy farms. The first 19 years I was farming with my father. We had a 160 acre dairy farm with 52 head of dairy cows and 45 head of young stock.

EXPERIENCE:

1974-1981 Wausau Homes; Wausau, WI

Worked in various areas of sub-assembly of pre-fabricated homes--roof sections, bathrooms, plumbing trees.

1973-1974 Platinum Mink Ranch; Minocqua, WI

Fed and otherwise cared for mink.

1971-1973 Hansen's Dairy; Jim Falls, WI

On this 2,200 acre dairy farm, I fed, washed, and milked as well as occasionally herded. Also helped with artificial insemination program.

1970-1971 Haverhill Dairy Farm; Prentice, WI

Assisted with work on dairy, beef, and hog farm.

REFERENCES: Available upon request.

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DO YOU HAVE A TRADE OR CRAFT? THIS RESUME MIGHT BE THE TYPE YOU WOULD USE

NAME
ADDRESS TELEPHONE:

JOB OBJECTIVE: Position as supervisor on a consumer home construction site for a general contractor.

SUMMARY OF SKILLS: For 12 years (1968-1980) I worked with a construction crew building homes in the Wisconsin Northwoods which today would sell for $50,000 to $80,000. Have experience ranging from digging, forming and pouring footings and basement walls to constructing and installing custom-made cabinetry in kitchens, living, and dining areas. During the last three years on the job, served as job-site foreman.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:

1968-1980 Millard Homes
White Lakes, WI

1980-1981 Simpson Forest Products
Crandon, WI

1981-1982 Reynolds Sugar Bush
Anawa, WI

EDUCATION: High School Graduate

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE: Enjoy all sorts of outdoor sports. Play left field for an industry-sponsored community baseball team. Hunt and fish in season as the opportunity offers. Member of a team in a bowling league in the winter.

REFERENCES: Available upon request.

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PART III: LET'S PLAN TO GET A JOB, OR...

JOB SEARCH STRATEGY

You know the kind of work you would like to have...

You have prepared a resume.

You know how to tailor your cover letter to the specific resume you've prepared.

NOW--

What must you do to insure that you get the job you really want?

RULE: Plan a strategy for your job search.

Strategy...

The word calls up visions of troops in movement, of guns in their emplacements, of chess pieces moving about a board.... Simply, strategy is a word which evokes images of action...planning...reaching a goal...zeroing in on a target....

And that is exactly what you need to do--zero in on your target. Your target is an employer.

You have several choices for reaching that target of a job. You might:

--Distribute your resumes randomly. (One way might be to rent a plane, fly over a city and just drop bundles of resumes out--be sure to cut the string around the bundle first.)

(This approach is a little better than hiring a skywriter who writes out...JERRY SEEKS JOB. At least the person who picks up a copy of your resume now has a telephone number.)

Or you might stand on a busy street corner in town and hand copies of your resume to every person who passes by. (Of the thousands of people who pass the corner of 42nd and Broadway in New York City

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each day there must be somebody who can offer you a job....)

But no matter how you approach it, random distribution is expensive and not very productive.

There are better ways...

...And one of those ways which is a little better is mass mailing. Draw up a list of everybody, everywhere, who could possibly be interested in you. Write a form letter, get it mass produced, and send a copy of the form letter and a copy of your resume...

...And people who prepare mass mailings will tell you that you will be lucky to get a one and one-half percent return. (That's one or two answers out of a hundred and these may be form rejection letters!)

You might try going door-to-door, completing an application and leaving a copy of your resume. This procedure might work reasonably well in a small community where most of the businesses are located in one area. Trying to use this technique in a larger city could be very wasteful of resources--time, money, and energy.

Let's narrow the process even further.

--Read the HELP WANTED ads.

--Ask your friends for help and advice.

--Ask your relatives.

--Go to the local Job Service office (United States Employment Service).

--Call the Chamber of Commerce.

--Go to the local library and ask the reference librarian for help.

--Check the Yellow Pages.

--Look in trade journals.

--Go to a private employment agency.

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All of the preceding are possibilities for finding out where the jobs are, but there is a step which comes BEFORE the actual job hunt....

You know what it is you want to do, and you have written a resume telling how well you can do it. Now, before you start looking for a job, you need to decide:

WHERE DO I WANT TO DO IT?

--Is it the Northwoods because you want to spend your free time hunting and fishing?

--Is it the mountains because you want to spend your free time mountain climbing and downhill skiing and prospecting for gold?

--Is it the Sun Belt because you can't stand the thought of another winter with high heating bills and being cooped up inside all the time?

--Is it the the city because of the cultural and entertainment possibilities?

--What about schools for your children? Your spouse? Yourself?

--Are you looking for the highest possible pay and all else is secondary?

JUST WHERE IS IT (Geographically, Culturally, Socially,...) THAT YOU WANT TO SPEND YOUR LIFE? (Or at least a significant part of it.)

Spend some time on this one. You will need an atlas and all kinds of Chamber of Commerce material. Get a copy of the business directory for the community(ies) you ultimately decide offer you the best opportunity. The Chamber of Commerce will be able to provide the directory at a fairly reasonable cost. Subscribe to newspapers from the areas you have selected. The Sunday paper will give you:

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--The most HELP WANTED ads.

--Feature articles about different things in the community.

--Entertainment advertising.

--News about the political scene.

--Information (articles and advertising) about housing.

In the course of this exercise, you are going to, for whatever reasons, narrow your search field to only a few communities. You are going to have identified the businesses, industries, organizations, and agencies in each community that offers you the best opportunity for employment. Within any given community there may be as few as:

Five potential employers

or as many as:

Five hundred potential employers.

If there are only five (or maybe ten or even twenty) possible employers in a community, the next step is already done for you.

On the other hand, if there are 500 (or maybe only 100), you must spend some time now deciding...

...WHO DO I WANT TO DO IT WITH?

What companies, agencies, activities, offer you the kind of opportunity that you think you want.

Now comes another period of intensive investigation. What clues can you pick up by comparing all of the entries about the different agencies in the material you have read? Did you see an article in a newspaper that provides information about Company A that makes it look better than the information available from the Chamber of Commerce? There is a lot of sifting to be done. Try to develop a list of no more than 20 to 30 different places that you think can offer you the kind of opportunity you need.

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In the process of narrowing down the places you would like to work, you probably have done some ranking--the organization (people) for whom you would most like to work...least like to work. If this prioritizing has not yet been done....

BUT WON'T ALL OF THIS SEARCHING BE EXPENSIVE?

It can be; nothing is cheap. It is almost axiomatic in business that you must spend 95 cents to make a buck, and since you are trying to find a job where you will make a few bucks....

There are, however, ways of doing the job that make the whole process much less expensive. Before you subscribe to a Sunday newspaper, write a Chamber of Commerce, buy a Business Directory...

...TRY YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY.

Public libraries subscribe to many of the newspapers within their region, and often to several more from cities across the nation. They may also have some Chamber of Commerce material, some business directories, business magazines, and newspapers (BUSINESS WEEK, FORBES, FORTUNE, WALL STREET JOURNAL...), indexes to back issues, state or regional industrial directories....

And college and university libraries will have even more information. More newspaper subscriptions, a wider assortment of directories, telephone directories from across the nation, subscriptions to a huge variety of trade journals and newsletters....

Use of all of this material is usually free to anyone who makes the effort to walk in and use the material in the library. Ask the reference librarian for help in finding material. Their job is to do everything necessary and possible to get you the information you need. (The reference librarian is not going to do the searching, however; that is your job.)

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AT LAST! You are ready to make some contacts. You know...

WHAT it is you want to do.

WHERE it is you want to do it.

WHO it is you want to do it with.

Your contacts can be in person, by mail, by telephone. All three are appropriate and can be used together.

However, if your potential work site (WHERE) is any distance away, getting in your car and driving, boarding an airplane or a train may be a waste of time unless you have made some advance contact.

Usually people are responsive when you let them know you are coming, tell them your interests, and request information and advice which fits the employer's experience. Write a letter--a good letter--and enclose a copy of your resume. Keep your letter short and specific. Address it to a particular individual, by name. Page 42 has an example of such a letter.

Follow up, in a week, with a telephone call...

"This is _____. You have my resume; would it be satisfactory if I came for an interview at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, (date)? I plan to be in your city for about a week, beginning that date."

You have indicated, through your letter and your telephone call, that you have done your research:

--You have a specific name of a person in authority in the firm.

--You know the firm can use you.

--You know the state of business in general involving that firm.

--You are interested enough that you are making the trip at your own expense.

Now it is going to be worth your while to burn the gasoline or buy the airline ticket to get to the interview. You have an appointment.

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A LETTER ASKING FOR AN INTERVIEW WHERE YOU
ARE NOT CERTAIN A JOB EXISTS

Your address
Date

Mr. John Smith, Manager
Residential Construction Division
Build-Them-Well General Contractors
217 West Fourth Street
Memphis, TN 38001

Dear Mr. Smith:

Prospects again are bright for the residential construction industry, and carpenters--good carpenters--are in demand. The enclosed resume indicates the quality of my work.

I had reason to visit Memphis for an extended period of time two years ago, and the city appeared to me then to be a good place to live. My family has roots in Middle Tennessee, and I think it is time for me to make connections with my past after spending several years away.

I plan to again be in Memphis in early April. Would it be possible to talk with you at that time about employment as a finish carpenter? I will call you the morning of April 25 to determine when we might arrange an interview.

Sincerely yours,

Your name, typed

Enclosure

SOME SUGGESTIONS AND THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER:

--Do you want a job or do you want to begin building a career?

--Research thoroughly on each potential employer.

--Individualize your approach to each potential employer. This means writing a separate letter, developing a specific resume.

--Keep a log of all your job-hunting activity...letters written, phone calls made, interview taken...EVERYTHING. Record names, phone numbers, dates, addresses, titles.

--Plan your telephone calls in advance. You may want to write down important statements and questions and then check them off as you talk about each one.

--Form a support group of other job seekers. Meet once a week to exchange ideas, leads, experiences. Give each other encouragement; and, at the same time, critique each other's techniques and approach to the job-hunting situation. Studies show that people in support groups find more satisfying positions and find opportunities sooner than people who are job hunting alone.

AND ABOVE ALL...

--Avoid Ego-Erosion. You're OK! Don't let a turn-down or a turn-off defeat you. You may have to take as long as several months to get the kind of job you want.

DON'T STOP BELIEVING IN YOURSELF!

MORE TIPS ON JOB HUNTING:

--Ask others for help...but don't expect others to get a job for you. YOU ARE THE ONLY PERSON WHO CAN GET A JOB FOR YOU.

--Prepare for the job hunt by learning all you can about any employer in whom you have a strong interest. Be able to describe clearly what you would like to do for that activity. Contact the person most likely to be in a position to hire you (this is not necessarily the personnel office). If you have selected a city or general locale and will be looking for a job there, subscribe in advance to the local newspapers, and obtain lists of prospective employers in the area before you attempt to relocate.

--Send your resume with a cover letter to any potential employers, and state that you will be contacting them regarding an interview upon your arrival in the community. Exercise care in organizing and constructing your resume; it is one of the most important documents you will ever write.

--Pursue all possible avenues, and don't become discouraged by a number of rejections. Follow up on all leads in a business-like manner. Don't press the panic button; don't fly off in all directions at once.

--The job you are seeking may turn up when you least expect it, but you can't wait for it to come to you.

BE AGGRESSIVE AND GO AFTER IT!

And at last, after all the research, the writing, the telephone calls, the waiting, somebody says...

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PART IV: ...I WANT TO TALK TO YOU!

Someone has told you that you are to be interviewed for employment. Good! You've passed the first hurdle.

It is almost impossible to get a job without an interview. Surveys indicate that at least 99% of the job offers that are made, are made following an interview. Only under the most unusual of circumstances can you expect to have an employer say, "You're hired," without having had an interview.

Why is an interview so important? Why is it such a must in the employment picture?

AN INTERVIEW IS A CONVERSATION WITH A PURPOSE

The purpose of the conversation is to determine whether or not you are an individual who can "fit in" to the organization, the work situation. Will the other people in the organization be willing to, and enjoy, working with you?

Your skills, knowledge, ability, education...can all be checked by comparing your resume and your application with reports from previous employers and from schools which you have attended. Opinions and feelings and facts about you can be gotten from your references.

But until the prospective employer has a chance to meet you, to talk with you, can that employer determine what you are really like. Can you work well with others in the business? Will your appearance and behavior on the job be a credit to the organization? There are lots of questions about you as a person that can only be answered as a result of an interview.

And every interview and each interviewer is going to be different. No two interviews will ever be alike.

PREPARE FOR THE INTERVIEW!

Interviews are not casual conversations. It takes work and time to prepare for an effective interview. The interviewer will have control of the conversation. You may have some idea of the nature of the interview, but you need to be prepared for a wide variety of situations.

First of all...

--Do you know the location of the interview?

--Do you know the time it is to be held?

--Do you know the route to take to get there?

--Do you know whether or not parking is available close to the interview site?

--Do you know what might be appropriate dress?

After you have worked through all of these details...

--Do you know all you need to know about the business with which you are interviewing?

--Do you have a clear picture of the job for which you are interviewing?

There's a lot of work to be done before you ever shake hands with the interviewer. But finally, after all of your searching, planning, writing, telephoning, traveling...THIS IS IT! Today is the job interview. This is the payoff for all of your work.

But before you sit down to talk, let's take another look at the points just listed...

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--Be on time! Allow plenty of time for on-the-way emergencies, shortage of parking, etc. And don't be too early. Everything goes just right and you find yourself ready to walk in to the interview site a half-hour before the time you are scheduled. DON'T! Walk around the block; sit in your car and review your notes; watch people walking by...do anything but don't walk into the interview site. You will do nothing but create a beautiful set of sweaty palms if you do walk in early.

--Dress at least as well as you would expect to dress on the job. If you are interviewing for a mechanic's job, at the very least wear clean jeans and a clean shirt. You might have your coveralls and your tools in the trunk of your car so that you can go to work immediately if necessary, but be clean and neat for the interview. For an office job: A man wears a coat and tie; a woman wears a pants suit or a tailored dress or suit dress. Jeans and a shirt or blouse may be all right once you have started work, but not for the interview.

--Go into the interview with a good knowledge of the business. What product does the organization make or sell? What service does it provide? This takes research; it means reading articles in newspapers and reading pamphlets available from the Chamber of Commerce or from the business or organization itself.

Then there are some other rules to pay attention to before the interview ever starts...

--If you have not done so previously...spend some time and thought in filling out the application blank.

--Have a resume with you so that you not only have the information necessary for the application, you can give one to the interviewer if necessary.

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--Make sure you have the sheet of paper with the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of your references.

--Shake hands with the interviewer! And be certain that your handshake is the purposeful, firm, business-like type. This is not the time for the wet-fish, sweaty-palm, or kiss-the-back-of-my-hand type of handshake. Women, especially, need to make sure they reach for a male interviewer's hand.

--Remember the name of the interviewer. And if you don't catch it the first time...ask that it be repeated.

It all sounds pretty trivial, doesn't it?

And yet, just because all these points seem so trivial, they also are easily forgotten, ignored, or overlooked. But don't forget...

YOU ONLY HAVE ONE CHANCE TO MAKE A FIRST IMPRESSION!

Studies of the employment situation show that many interviewers are swayed by that first impression. The typical interviewer will form an opinion about a candidate within the first minute or two. Why run the risk of starting off with a poor impression and having to devote the remainder of the interview to "digging yourself out of a hole"?

Now you've made it through the door to the room where the interview is to be held? Are you ready for what comes next?

Probably the interviewer will devote a minute or two to putting you at ease, with comments about the weather, or about whether you had any trouble finding the interview location....

Sometimes, especially if the interviewer smokes, you might be offered a cigarette...

DON'T TAKE IT!

A polite, "No, thank you." is all that is necessary. Don't reach for your own; don't tell about how you have just quit smoking; don't comment on the evils of smoking...(Of course, if cigarette smoke really makes you ill, tell the interviewer so that you don't have to suffer through the interview and possibly embarrass yourself and the interviewer.)

Smoking on your part can be detracting; maybe you hold your cigarette in a way the interviewer never saw before and concentrates on that rather than you. It also adds a casualness to you that you do not want at this particular time.

There are several types of interviews. The most common type is the One-on-One--just you and the interviewer. The two of you will talk for a period of from 15 minutes to more than a half hour, and a decision will be made on the basis of this one conversation.

Other types are:

--Panel - Two or more people will be interviewing you. Only one person may ask the questions, or all of the team may ask the questions. The decision will be made by the group. This type of interview is most common with government agencies or educational institutions, although businesses are also beginning to make use of this type.

--Group - There may be several candidates and only one or two interviewers. The interviewer is interested in the interaction among the candidates; most commonly, the group interview is used when seeking management or supervisory personnel.

--Stress - This can be a part of any interview. Any time you are asked a question beginning with "What if...," or "How would you... you are in a stress situation. It is possible the entire interview

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might be stressful, often by design. The interviewer might well start off with an emotion-ridden statement, trying to antagonize you--get you to "blow your cool." ("Our experience is that women don't perform well in this position, but Affirmative Action regulations require that we interview you anyway....")

--Informational - Most often this is a group interview. The employer gives information about the job and you (and the other candidates) decide whether or not you are serious about wanting to be interviewed further, generally one-on-one.

But just what is an interview? As we noted earlier...

A CONVERSATION WITH A PURPOSE.

This will be a serious conversation. There will be chances for laughs, but even during the laughs you are being "measured" for the job. So far as the potential employer is concerned, the purpose of the conversation is:

--Are you the right person for the job?

So far as you are concerned, the purpose of the conversation is to determine:

--Is this the right job for me?

No matter how you look at it, the interview conversation is serious business.

Most interviews divide roughly into two parts. During the first part--about 60% of the interview--the interviewer will be asking you questions and you will be responding. During the second part--about 40% of the interview--you will be asking questions and the interviewer will be responding.

SOME MORE TIPS:

--Be ready for a performance interview, whether a mechanic, typist, or any other skill, regardless of the kinds of certificates you might have.

--Be positive about yourself. "I'm OK" is your attitude.

--Ask if you might tour the shop...office...store...and look at the equipment, meet other employees, etc., with the person who is doing the interviewing.

--Ask yourself: "Is this the kind of place in which I want to work?"

--Listen carefully to questions which are asked, rather than thinking about what questions might be asked.

--Save questions about pay, benefits, etc., until toward the end of the conversation or until the interviewer has said, "You're hired." Even though it might be true, you don't want to leave the impression that all you are interested in is money.

WHAT IS, "I'M OK"?

One of the wealthiest men in the United States, W. Clement Stone, has a system which he calls, Positive Mental Attitude (PMA). Stone built his concept of PMA on a foundation of one word: DESIRE. Applying the concept of PMA to the task of finding employment, can you say to yourself:

"I want a job. I want a job badly. I won't take just any job, but I will give careful consideration to any and all opportunities within my chosen field."

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Can you say to yourself:

"I will do my best to go out and make job opportunities where seemingly none exist. I will do my best to convince an employer that I can do the job better than anyone else and that I am needed."

Can you say to yourself:

"I know my strengths. I can tell an employer what those strengths are. I also know my weaknesses; I will do my best to avoid job opportunities where my weaknesses could get in my way...and now that I know my weaknesses, I will do my very best to overcome them."

Can you say to yourself:

"I know there are a great many people in the job-hunting arena. I know that many of them are good and can offer me some real competition. I know that I probably will be turned down more than once. I also know, though, that if I keep trying in a thinking, methodical way, I will ultimately get the job I want."

Can you say to yourself:

"I'm good at what I do. I know it, and I know how to convince an employer. I'm OK."

YOU WILL GET YOUR JOB

AND NOW, LET'S GO BACK TO THE BEGINNING...

The interviewer's first step is going to be to try to put you at ease, to help you relax. You might be asked:

--Whether you had trouble finding the location or finding parking.

--What you think of the weather.

--About some personal activity which you listed on your resume...(I see from your resume that you are a competitive cross-country skier; did you race in the _____ this year?)

--Tell me about yourself.

The last two items need some further explanation. The skiing question could have been answered with simply a "yes" or a "no". That's not enough! "Yes, I placed ___. That was a good afternoon; I really enjoyed skiing that day." NEVER respond to a question with just one word!

When an interviewer asks you to tell about yourself, you are being asked because most people like to talk about themselves and it is usually easy to talk about yourself. But, be careful...it is possible to get started on this question and completely lose the interviewer. A suitable response might be along the lines of, "My resume gives you most of the relevant information about me. It doesn't tell you, though, that I'm generally a quiet, thoughtful person and that I like learning new things. Generally, I work best either when I'm alone or working in a small group...." With that as a start, you should be able to carry your response from there. Tell things about yourself that are not in your resume or on your application blank. Make sure, though, that you are saying things that are in some way related to the job for which you are interviewing; be careful that you don't begin presenting negative items.

Responses to some of the opening questions during the interview suggest that it is time for another interviewing tip:

MAINTAIN EYE CONTACT WITH THE INTERVIEWER?

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Some people think you should maintain eye contact--look the interviewer in the eye--because people who don't--who are shifty-eyed--can't be trusted. That might be true of some of the people with whom you interview, but the real reason for maintaining eye contact is so that you can be constantly "reading" the interviewer.

--Did my response to that last question go over well?

--Was the last response too long?

--Is this response too long; am I causing the interviewer to lose interest in me because my responses are not concise--to the point?

Don't give one-word responses to questions from the interviewer, but also be careful to avoid responses which run on...and on...and on.... Probably no response should last for more than 15 to 20 seconds (30 to 40 words). Of course, there are exceptions; a complex question may very well call for a complex response.

After the introductory phase of the interview is past, the really difficult part of the interview lies ahead. The interviewer will want to explore:

--Your background. What sorts of things have you done on previous jobs...in school...why?

--Your goals. Where is it that you hope to go...advancement plans...staying with the job...why?

--Your competencies. Have you ever typed a financial statement ...repaired a five-speed transmission? How do you set up the typewriter...open the gear box?

Usually, at about this point the interviewer will indicate that it is your turn to be asking questions, seeking information. Make

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sure that your questions are relevant and concise. It is very obvious to the interviewer that if a 25-year-old asks a question about retirement programs...the question is probably being asked just to ask a question. If you have no questions...say so! "No, I really have no questions at this time; I think you have covered everything very well in the material you gave me about the company."

Your questions to the interviewer indicate the amount of work you have done in preparation for the interview. A question along the lines of, "What is it that this company does?", indicates that you have done nothing in the way of homework in preparing for the interview. You just told the interviewer that you are "looking for a job." Very few organizations are seeking employees who are just looking for a job.

And then it is back to the interviewer for:

--The close. What further steps there might be in the process of getting the job...additional interviews...tests to be taken...other candidates...when a decision will be made.

Now the interview is over. You are out the door. If the interview situation has been tense--stressful--and the adrenalin has been flowing freely, this seems the logical time to stop off at the first restaurant for a cup of coffee, go window shopping, walk in the park, have a beer....

NOT YET!

Now is the time to isolate yourself from everything and everyone just as rapidly as you possibly can. Make notes on the interview. What did you do right? Wrong? If you had a particular question to answer again, how would you respond? In other words: LEARN FROM EACH INTERVIEW SITUATION SO THAT THE NEXT ONE WILL BE BETTER.

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Now, after ten minutes of review and self-critique...go have your cup of coffee.

UH OH! WHAT DO I DO NOW?

On page 21, we discussed ways of handling an extended absence from work in your resume. However you might have handled the absence, you ultimately got an interview. In the interview, everything has been going smoothly, when the interviewer suddenly says:

"Bill (Joan), I can't tell for certain from your resume, but it appears there have been some gaps in your employment. Tell me, what have you been doing since 1978?"

Or, the question might be:

"You indicate that you have been self-employed since 1980. Tell me, why did you leave your job to become self-employed; and why are you seeking to return to the hourly paid labor force at this time?"

Your response to the question about what you have been doing since 1978 is NOT, "Oh, nothing much, just sitting and watching television."

Your responses to perfectly legitimate questions, which begin to uncover a portion of your past which has some negative connotations, must be carefully thought out in advance of the interview. Do not leave yourself in a position of having to stumble and mumble your way through an explanation; prepare a response which is positive in nature.

Some examples of positive responses:

--"In 1978 I was injured on the job. The injury was such that I could not return to work at my old job. I am now completely recovered to the extent that the disability will in no way affect my performance on the job for which I am being considered."

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--"In 1978 I began suffering from arthritis of the spine and could no longer work at _____. The disease (ailment) has been surgically corrected; there is no evidence of arthritis in any other part of my body. I can perform all of the tasks that are a part of the job for which I am being considered."

--"In 1978 I was convicted of a felony and spent three years confined to the correctional institution at _____. I am fully rehabilitated, and my felony conviction in no way will affect my performance on the job. As a matter of fact, the skill I listed on my resume, _____, was learned while I was confined. This particular skill can be of considerable value to you."

Possibly you used the time, either while recovering from your injury (illness) or while confined, to continue your education. Did you complete your high school work? Start college or trade school work? Say so.

By all means, be as positive and "up-beat" as you possibly can in your explanation. There are both negative and positive terms to describe the same thing:

--"Disabling injury (accident)," not, "I hurt my back."

--"Correctional institution (facility)," not, "prison".

As with the preparation of the resume, don't try to hide the truth; don't lie. At the same time, there is no need to tell the whole painful truth. You should make a simple, uncluttered, statement of fact, in as straightforward and positive a manner as you can.

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WHEN DO WE TALK ABOUT MONEY?

To this point in this book, very little has been said about pay for your work. There has been no mention of salary...benefits... vacation...transportation...uniforms...tools furnished...retirement. Just when and how does this subject come to the surface?

Money--pay--and benefits are important. You know, however, that you are going to receive at least the minimum wage. The issue is: How much beyond the minimum wage are you going to be paid?

Before you begin applying for work--work of any kind--in a given geographic area, you should have a clear picture of just what your needs are. Presumably, unless you need a job--any job--to meet emergency expenses, you are not going to apply for a position which pays less than your needs.

--You know the going rate for a type of work either through reading or through contact with USES.

--You know your minimum needs.

--You know what you would like to have in the way of pay for doing the type of work you want to do.

Usually, large employers will have fixed pay scales which they have established through community surveys or through bargaining with labor unions or employee associations. In such a case, every person with a given set of qualifications will start at exactly the same pay; there is no room for bargaining on your part. You will be paid neither less nor more than the pre-determined rate.

Jobs of the type just described--a set pay scale--are often referred to as non-exempt jobs. Your pay for the work is set; if someone says, "You're hired!", you have a choice: Take it or leave it.

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Other jobs--usually management or supervisory positions--are referred to as exempt. There usually is some flexibility in the rate of pay given to you.

As your interview nears the end, you may hear...

--"We are prepared to offer you a wage (salary) of _____.

Would this amount be satisfactory?"

Or you may hear...

--"What are your salary requirements?"

In both cases, you take it from there.

If nothing is said about pay, you probably don't do anything for your chances of employment by raising the subject. You really have no choice but to wait until an offer is made.

It is relatively easy to determine the going rate of pay for a given type of work within any given community; contact the nearest United States Employment Service (known by different names in different states) office. USES does a good job of collecting payroll data on the jobs in each office area; this information is available to you for the asking.

A SUMMARY OF THE TIPS TO EFFECTIVE INTERVIEWING:

1. Be on time! Allow plenty of time for on-the-way emergencies.
2. Dress at least as well as you would expect to dress on the job.
3. Spend some time and thought in filling out the application blank.
4. Have a resume that has the information you may need for the application.
5. Make sure you have name, address, and telephone number for all references.

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6. Shake hands with the interviewer!
7. Remember the name of the interviewer!
8. Be prepared to go to work as soon as you possibly can.
9. Be ready for a performance interview, whether a mechanic, typist, or any other skill.
10. Be positive about yourself. "I'm OK."
11. Ask yourself: "Is this the kind of place in which I want to work?"
12. Ask to tour the shop, look at the equipment, etc., with the foreman or supervisor who is interviewing.
13. Listen carefully to questions which are asked, rather than thinking about what might be asked.
14. Save questions about pay, benefits, etc., until the end of the interview or (better yet) until after the interviewer has said, "You're hired."
15. What are you going to answer if you are asked, "Why do you like being a _____?"
16. If you have any doubts about how the interviewer's name might be spelled, or the company's address, ask for a business card at the close of the interview. Especially if the job is an office or supervisory job, send a brief thank-you note to the interviewer.

FACTORS EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEWERS DISLIKE:

1. Poor personal appearance.
2. Not being on time for the interview.
3. Overbearing, overaggressive, conceited attitude.

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4. Inability to express ideas clearly--poor voice, diction, grammar.
5. Lack of interest and enthusiasm (haven't read or learned anything about the employer).
6. Lack of confidence--passive, indifferent.
7. Failure to participate in any significant activities other than going to work.
8. Interested only in the dollar value of the position.
9. Expect too much too soon--don't want to start at the bottom.
10. Lack of tact.
11. Condemnation of past employers.
12. Fails to look interviewer in the eye.
13. "Wet fish" handshake.
14. Sloppy or poorly prepared application blank or resume.
15. Candidate who is not service-oriented--willing to help others.

TWENTY QUESTIONS...commonly asked by employment interviewers:

1. Why do you want to work for (company)?
2. Of all the jobs you have had, which one did you like the most? Why? (Least? Why?)
3. What do you think are the best qualities to bring to the job?
4. What would you like to be doing five years from now?
5. Why did you choose your particular vocation?
6. What do you do with your free time?
7. Tell me about yourself.
8. What are your feelings about overtime work? Travel away from home?

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9. What do you see as the disadvantages of your chosen vocation?

10 Who was the best supervisor you ever had? Why?

11. Why did you seek the training you have?

12. What did you like most about your training program?

13. What are your feelings when someone criticizes your work?

14. What do you like most about working?

15. What do you like least about working?

16. What would be your reaction if (describes a possible unpleasant work situation)?

17. Describe yourself as a team worker.

18. How did you find your job with _____?

19. Why did you leave your job with _____?

20. What do you consider your strongest skills and abilities? (Weakest?)

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AND IN CONCLUSION:

In the beginning of this book, William Faulkner was quoted as saying that, "...the only thing man does for eight hours a day, besides sleep, is work...."

If you spent that much time (eight hours a day) at something, it must be an important part of your life. For many people, work is the most important part of their life. For a few people, work is the only part of their lives that has any importance.

Work gives people:

--Money.

--Self-respect.

--Prestige.

--Power.

--Identification.

Work helps people learn not only what they are, but who they are, as well as giving them the money to use to "bring home the bacon."

This book has tried to give you the latest tools and techniques for finding out not only who you are, but also for locating that specific job that can tell you (and others) what you are.

Work diligently and purposefully and you will find the job that is right for you.

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APPENDIX A: WHAT IS EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY?

In the United States today, everyone with comparable qualifications and skills is supposed to have equal access to any given job. Hiring decisions are made on the basis of an individual's qualifications for the job and for no other reason.

There are many personal information items which cannot be used in making a hiring decision unless the interviewer and the business can prove that they are legitimate qualifications. These items are:

--Place of birth.

--Religion.

--Race, Color, or National Origin.

--Sex.

--Marital Status.

--Citizenship (unless the job requires a security clearance).

--Family, number of dependents.

--Age (you can be asked, "Are you between the ages of 18 and 65?").

--Disabilities (you can be asked if you have any disability which would limit your performance on the job for which you are applying).

--Selective Service status, type of military discharge.

--Organizations to which you belong (other than those relevant to the position for which you are applying).

--Arrest Record (you can be asked if you have been convicted of a felony within the past seven years).

A prospective employer cannot ask you for this information unless it is directly relevant to the job. This applies both to the

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application blank and to the interview. Examples of relevance: It is legal to ask your religion if you are applying for a position as a teacher of religious education with a particular denomination; it is legal to ask your sex if you are applying for a position as locker room attendant at a country club.

Even though all the items given previously are illegal (to the extent that the information may not be used in making a hiring decision), you may be asked questions about this information, anyway. Sometimes the interviewer may simply be ignorant of the law. On other occasions, the interviewer may just be trying to be friendly and have no malice whatsoever.

Still other interviewers may have preconceptions that persons over/under a certain age, or marital status, or family dependent status make better (or poorer) employees and may be determined to obtain the information, whether they have a right to it or not.

Women in particular are subjected to questions about marital and family dependency status. There are even instances in which young, married women have had such questioning carried to the point where they are asked what type of birth control technique they use.

Although most application blanks have been "cleaned up," and no longer ask for personal information; there are still firms who are using up old stocks of applications. It is completely in order, when you are asked to complete an application asking you for date of birth, sex, marital status, etc., to either draw a line through the item or to write in, "Not Relevant."

It is not so easy as drawing a line through the question when you are asked for personal information in the interview. For example,

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in an interview you are asked, "How old are you?" Your response could be:

--"Fifty-two".

--"Fifty-two, but tell me, why is my age important to you?"

--"I really don't think that information is relevant to your making a hiring decision on this job."

--"My age is no concern of yours at this time."

What is your response going to be when, in the interview, you are asked one or more of these "illegal" questions?

WHAT RECOURSE DO YOU HAVE?

The Federal government has laws designed to prevent employment discrimination on the basis of age, sex, race, or disability. Most states also have similar laws, and both the Federal government and State governments have established Equal Employment Opportunity Commissions to oversee these areas of possible employment discrimination.

If, in your search for employment, you are rejected by an employer, and you think you are at least as well qualified as the person who got the position, consider:

--Is the successful candidate of the opposite sex?

--Is the successful candidate of a race other than your race?

--Did the interviewer learn that you have a disability unrelated to the performance of the job (or of the job modified to accommodate your disability)?

--Are you over 40, but not over 65, while the successful candidate is under the age of 40?

If any of these four conditions exist, you may file a complaint and a request for investigation with either the Federal or the State Equal

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Employment Opportunity Commission. Their addresses and telephone numbers can be obtained from any USES office.

The Commissions have no enforcement powers; they can act only as mediators between you and the employer. The maximum penalty which may be assessed (if your claim is accepted) is pay from the date of employment of the other person, plus giving you the job. If the employer will not accpet the fact that you should have been given the job as the best qualified candidate, then you have further recourse by filing suit in either Federal or State court, and waiting for the case to come to trial.

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APPENDIX B: A LIST OF COMMONLY USED WORK SKILLS

Physical Skills:

- Using Hand Tools
- Operating Machines
- Operating Heavy Equipment
- Welding
- Driving Motor Vehicles
- Typewriting
- Operating Office Equipment
- Finger Dexterity
- Dancing

Word Skills:

- Writing
- Editing
- Reading
- Speaking
- Teaching

Number Skills:

- Counting
- Calculating
- Budgeting
- Records Keeping
- Taking Inventory

Thinking Skills:

- Researching
- Analyzing

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Problem-Solving

Organizing

Diagnosing

Testing

Evaluating

Composing Music

Improvising

Helping Skills:

Listening

Motivating

Healing

Counseling

Sensitivity to Feelings

Leadership Skills:

Organizing

Coordinating

Selling

Persuading

Initiating

Directing

Changing

This is only a partial list of all the skills that people use at work. Richard Bolles, in the book, WHAT COLOR IS YOUR PARACHUTE?, lists many, many more.

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APPENDIX C: OTHER BOOKS ABOUT WORK AND GETTING A JOB WHICH YOU MIGHT WANT TO READ

Bird, Caroline, EVERYTHING A WOMAN NEEDS TO KNOW TO GET PAID WHAT SHE'S WORTH...IN THE 1980s, 1981 (Bantam Books, New York).

Bolles, Richard N., WHAT COLOR IS YOUR PARACHUTE?, 1982 (Ten Speed Press, Berkeley, CA).

Catalyst Staff, MARKETING YOURSELF, 1981 (Bantam Books, New York).

Coleman, John R., BLUE COLLAR JOURNAL, 1974 (Lippincott, Philadelphia).

Crystal, John C., WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE WITH MY LIFE?, 1974 (Seabury Press, New York).

Half, Robert, THE ROBERT HALF WAY TO GET HIRED IN TODAY'S LABOR MARKET, 1981 (Rawson, Wade Publishers, New York).

Irish, Richard, GO HIRE YOURSELF AN EMPLOYER, 1978 (Anchor Press, New York).

Josefowitz, Natasha, PATHS TO POWER, 1980 (Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Menlo Park, CA).

Lathrop, Richard, WHO'S HIRING WHO, 1976 (Reston Press, Reston, VA).

Zimmeth, Mary, WOMEN'S GUIDE TO RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT, 1979 (Gabriel Books, Mankato, MN).

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